



Deborah A. Gist  
Commissioner

State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
Shepard Building  
255 Westminster Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

### ***Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee***

*The Rhode Island Special Education Advisory Committee is an active voice in advocating that all students receive superior educational services enabling each student to achieve optimum success throughout the school years and into the world of adulthood.*

**March 19, 2015**

**6:00 pm – 8:00 pm**

RI Parent Information Network  
1210 Pontiac Avenue Cranston, RI 02920

**Present:** Edward Angilly, Sharon Bissonnette, Eileen Botelho, Ann Brockmann, Tarin Byrne, Jennifer Connolly, Lori DiPina, Susan Donovan, Cindy Duckworth, Joanne Eichinger, Gillian Elliott Pearis, Jennifer Gladding, Rosemary Gomes, Patti Hien, Barbara Irons, Laura Laviano, Trish Martins, , JoAnn Nannig, Pamela O'Brien, Robin Pacheco, Mary Pendergast, Douglas Pierson, Brian Quigg, and Maria Silvestri-Golotto

**Absent:** Cris Brodeur\* Cherie Cruz, Deborah Garneau\*, Elizabeth Santana, Sharon Ursini-Quimby\*

*\*denotes that prior notice was given regarding absence*

**RIDE/RITAP Attendees:** David Sienko, Beth Pinto & Mary Ann Snider

**Call to Order, Welcome, and Agenda Review:** The meeting was called to order at 6:05 pm by Sue Donovan. Sue welcomed all members, reviewed the agenda.

#### **New Business:**

Sue Donovan introduced the guest speaker Mary Ann Snider, RIDE Chief of Educator Excellence and Instructional Effectiveness who provided a presentation on RIDE's ESEA Waiver, explaining the accountability system, providing a timeline for all of the scoring, reporting and release of data and then explained the growth metric. Post-secondary credentials, the classification label (potential) changes and the concluded with a summary of additional features and considerations. Questions were answered throughout and following the presentation.

#### **Announcements:**

- RIPIN employment opportunities
- Parent Survey Notice
- Dare to Dream May 20, 2015 @ URI – online registration available at [www.ritap.org](http://www.ritap.org)
- Dept. of Health Equity Summit on May 7, 2015
- Wrights law Special Education Law and Advocacy Conference March 24, 2015 at Providence Sheraton
- RIPIN Education Exchange Monday March 23, 2015 @ RIPIN 6PM-7:30PM
- RISEAC membership Drive
- RICART Meet with the Doctors event March 28, 2015
- Providence Transition Academy Fundraiser (Wine Tasting) April 9, 2015

**Approval of February 2015 RISEAC Meeting Minutes** – motion to approve by Brian Quigg; seconded by Maria Silvestri-Golotto. All Approved. Minutes Accepted.

## **March RISEAC Director's Report**

### **OSCAS Comprehensive Needs Assessment Survey – Underway**

The OSCAS – IDEA Team is currently assessing the current and future needs for technical assistance from the special education administrators. Technical assistance is delivered by the RIDE staff and through contracts with several agency partners including: The Rhode Island Technical Assistance Project (RITAP), the Regional Education Collaboratives (Northern, East Bay and West Bay Collaboratives), The Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities and our parent partner agencies Rhode Island Parent Information Network (RIPIN) and the Parent Support Network (PSN), and others. Naturally, some of these agencies provide services in addition to OSCAS supported technical assistance. A survey to collect preliminary information from the directors will be sent tomorrow and will serve as a foundation for assessing future TA needs.

### **3rd Annual RI Transition Institute- A Great Success!**

The 3rd annual Rhode Island Transition Institute was a huge success with over 200 attendees at Roger Williams University made up of special educators, administrators, parents, ORS counselors, transition coordinators and national transition experts. There were 31 school district teams that spent two days learning from each other and our national partners on developing creative, effective, and evidenced-based transition practices. District teams learned and incorporated the “Taxonomy for Transition Programming: A Model for Planning, Organizing and Evaluating Transition Education, Services and Programs” and left with a strategic district level transition plan. Transition is an essential component to how we work, live, study, and play. RI is committed to continuing efforts that bring inspired people together in forums like this as a means to improve outcomes for youth with disabilities. Thank you to everyone who assisted and participated.

### **Parent Survey - Help Get the Word Out!**

The 9th annual Special Education Statewide Parent Survey will be administered from late March to May 2015. Advertisements for the annual survey will be in the Sunday Providence Journal, Family Fun insert in the Providence Journal, the Pro Jo website and on RIPTA busses internal digital signs and external signs shortly. Please help us by distributing the fliers provided in this OSCAS Update. Thanks for your effort to increase parent participation. If you have questions, need assistance or additional materials, please contact Beth Pinto at 222-8349 or [Elizabeth.Pinto@ride.ri.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.Pinto@ride.ri.gov). Attached to this Update you will find flyers for the survey in English and Spanish; a fact sheet and FAQ. Other languages are available; please contact Beth for other languages and additional materials.

### **RIDE Post Part B Application for Public Review and Comment**

The annual IDEA Part B Application has been posted to the RIDE web site for public review and comment. You may access the application at: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/StudentsFamilies/SpecialEducation/SpecialEducationRegulations.aspx>. The deadline for comments is May 4, 2015 at 4:00PM. In addition, we will send a reminder to the RISEAC list serve.

### **From the Commissioners Field Memo**

The following items are reprinted from the Commissioners Field memo that may have particular importance for RISEAC.

RIDE recruiting districts, schools for Rhode Island Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) Rhode Island Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (RI MTSS) is a training and technical-assistance opportunity that provides professional development and systems-development support for the implementation of an integrated model of supporting academic (RTI) and behavioral (PBIS) interventions, strategies, and practices. The goal of participating is for districts and schools to develop a self-sustaining integrated RTI/PBIS framework for providing evidence-based and data-based decision-making procedures to enhance student development across all tiers of support (Universal [School-Wide] Prevention, Targeted Group Interventions, and Individual Intensive Supports). Districts and schools interested in receiving this training should visit <http://sherlockcenter.MTSSLetterofInterest.sgizmo.com/s3/> for more information and to complete an

initial Letter of Interest online application by March 20. After submitting the online Letter of Interest, districts and schools are welcome to attend an informational session at the Rhode Island College Sherlock Center, from 9-11:30 a.m. on either March 25 or April 7. RI MTSS is a joint venture by RIDE (Rhode Island Department of Education) and the Paul V. Sherlock Center on Disabilities at Rhode Island College.

RI Strategic Plan: Design team seeks feedback on 2nd prototype of strategic plan for education (also posted to list serve)

Five months ago, we announced a statewide survey on public education, which served as the first step in the process of developing and writing our next strategic plan for education in Rhode Island. More than 10,000 Rhode Islanders participated in the survey, and the results have guided the team of volunteers that is developing and writing the strategic plan. I am grateful that the views and the voices of so many Rhode Islanders have played a central role in this on-going process.

Last month, the 26 members of the Ambassador Design Team released their first prototype for the plan, which consisted of a set of values statements. Through surveys and through community meetings, the team members sought and received feedback on this prototype. Based on this feedback, the team has released its second prototype, which includes revised value statements and a set of priorities that will serve as the organizing principles for the strategic plan.

Now, we are reaching out for your feedback on this second prototype. Your feedback will provide valuable information to the Ambassador Design Team members as they review and revise their prototype and work toward developing a third prototype to release this spring.

I would be very grateful if you would use this link to review the new prototype and provide the design team with your feedback: [www.ride.ri.gov/Plan-Feedback](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Plan-Feedback).

Please share this link with others on your team, in your network, and in your community.

We have also posted on our website a brief summary of the entire design process for developing and writing the strategic plan: [www.ride.ri.gov/Strategic-Plan](http://www.ride.ri.gov/Strategic-Plan).

With your help and engagement, I know that we are in the process developing an aspirational and ambitious strategic plan that will improve the lives of our students and their families for years to come. Rhode Island outlines progress toward transforming education in final Race to the Top report

Rhode Island has made significant progress toward transforming education through the use of the \$75-million Race to the Top grant, as we describe in “Rhode Island’s Race to the Top: Five Years of Transforming Education (2010-2015),” the summary report that we have submitted to the U.S.

Department of Education. The report highlights what Rhode Island has accomplished over the five years of implementation, what Rhode Island educators have learned in the process, and what work lies ahead. Over the span of this grant, we have narrowed several achievement gaps, reduced the dropout rate, and seen evidence that our graduates are better prepared for college. While much work lies ahead of us, the systems we have put into action thanks to Race to the Top funding will continue to improve instruction and to raise student achievement for years to come. The summary report that we submitted to the U.S. Department of Education notes that the goals for Rhode Island as a state have been to “build a strong foundation for educator effectiveness, develop rigorous curriculum and assessments, promote powerful use of data, and accelerate school performance – and [to] sustain this transformation beyond the grant period.” We have posted the [report](#) on our website.

Rhode Island ranked first in country on teacher-preparation program policies

The National Council on Teacher Quality has rated Rhode Island first in the country (tied with Florida and Indiana) based on state policies for teacher-preparation programs. The council awarded Rhode Island a grade of B+, tops in the country and unchanged from last year. In 2011, Rhode Island received a grade of D+. Much of the improvement is a result of the new set of standards for educator-preparation programs that the Board of Education approved in late 2013. I am very pleased that the National Council on Teacher Quality has recognized the quality and rigor of our standards and policies for educator preparation. Ensuring educator excellence has been our top priority over the past five years, and it is gratifying to receive national recognition for the progress we have made in this area. The [report](#) from the National Council on Teacher Quality, *The 2014 State Teacher Policy Yearbook*, notes that Rhode Island fully meets 5 of the 11 goals that the council has set and “nearly meets” five other goals. The only goal unmet is for elementary-teacher preparation in reading instruction. Ensuring educator excellence begins with improving the quality and rigor of our educator-preparation programs. The standards that we developed, in partnership with our colleges and universities and based on feedback from teachers in our schools, will help to recruit great candidates to the teaching profession and to prepare aspiring teachers and school leaders for success throughout their careers.

## Council approves revised Secondary School Regulations

On Monday (February 23), the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education, after months of public hearings, public comment, and statements issued during the open-forum portion of Council meetings, approved revisions to the Secondary School [Regulations](#). Under the revised regulations, the use of state assessments to determine eligibility for graduation will be in place statewide beginning with the Class of 2020. The revised regulations also specify that you may use state assessments as a local graduation requirement beginning with the Class of 2017, if you so desire. Here is the section of the revised regulations relating to assessments and graduation requirements:

### *L-6-3.3. Use of state assessments for high school graduation.*

- (a) Commencing with the class of 2020, students shall be required to reach a minimum achievement level on the state assessment or assessments in content areas designated by the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education. The Council shall (1) designate the content areas in which the state assessment serves as a graduation requirement and (2) establish the minimum student achievement levels on the state assessment necessary for graduation. The Council will determine the minimum level of required achievement; however, LEAs may set higher levels of student achievement as a requirement to receive a diploma. LEAs may choose to use the state assessment or other standardized assessment as one of the local graduation requirements prior to the 2020 date set forth above but no earlier than for the class of 2017.

## **RIDE to hold two-day Teacher Resource Summit**

RIDE is pleased to announce the Teacher Resource Summit – an event to gather Rhode Island educators to discuss identifying high-quality resources for sharing across the state. The goal of the summit is to upload a variety of high-quality, Rhode Island educator-approved resources into the Teacher Resource Library in the Instructional Support System. Work during the summit will include:

- using the rubrics to evaluate materials – self-authored or found – for alignment to standards and other metrics of quality;
- uploading high-quality materials to the Teacher Resource Library; and
- training on the EQulP rubric for mathematics, English language arts/literacy, or science; or
- training on similar rubrics for other content areas (social studies, fine and performing arts, physical education, health, and world languages, among others).

The summit will take place on April 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., in Providence. Please direct any questions or comments about the summit to Kate Schulz, at 222-8489 or [kate.schulz@ride.ri.gov](mailto:kate.schulz@ride.ri.gov).

Guidance issued on protecting privacy of students using online educational services

The U.S. Department of Education has released [model terms of service guidance](#) and a [training video](#) aimed at helping schools and districts protect student privacy while using online educational services and applications. The guidance offers examples of terms of service provisions to help school officials identify which online educational services and applications have strong privacy and data security policies and practices. “Reading and understanding terms of service agreements is tough, even for lawyers. We hope this guidance will help school officials identify privacy-friendly apps and online services and avoid providers that might abuse student information,” said Kathleen Styles, the U.S. Department of Education’s chief privacy officer. “This guidance will help schools and districts evaluate potential agreements and offer direction regarding terminology frequently used in these agreements,” Styles said. “By understanding commonly used provisions in these agreements, schools and districts will be better able to decide whether to consent to the terms for online educational services and applications.”

Additionally, school officials can check to see if the company in question has signed the [Student Privacy Pledge](#) from the Future of Privacy Forum and The Software & Information Industry Association. Among the recommendations:

**Marketing and Advertising:** Terms-of-service agreements should be clear that data may not be used to create user profiles for the purposes of targeting students or their parents for advertising and marketing, which could violate privacy laws.

**Data Collection:** Agreements should include a provision that limits data to only what is necessary to fulfill the terms.

**Data Use:** Schools and districts should restrict data use to only the purposes outlined in the agreement.

**Data Sharing:** While providers can use subcontractors, schools and districts should be made aware of these arrangements, and subcontractors should be bound by the limitations in the terms of service.

**Access:** Federal student records laws require schools and districts to make education records accessible to parents.

*Security Controls:* Failure to provide adequate security could lead to a violation of the [Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act](#), which protects student education records.

The document also provides links to the [Privacy Technical Assistance Center](#) and other resources that offer additional best-practice recommendations related to terms of service agreements.

In addition, a 9½-minute training video has been produced by the U.S. Department of Education, intended to help K-12 school officials better protect student privacy while using online educational services and applications.

The video offers a summary of the issue and provides examples to help educators identify which online educational services and applications are privacy-friendly and protect student data from improper use and disclosure.

### **RIDE seeking nominations for 2015-16 District Teachers of the Year**

The 2014-15 District Teacher of the Year profile sheet has been posted on the Educator Recognition page of the RIDE website. District Teacher of the Year Profile Sheets are due by May 1. This year, 31 teachers from across Rhode Island represented their individual LEAs as District Teachers of the Year. Each District Teacher of the Year (DTOY) also had the opportunity to take part in WaterFire: A Salute to Rhode Island Educators, to participate in leadership professional development, to collaborate with DTOYs from across the state, and to apply to represent all Rhode Island educators as the 2016 Rhode Island Teacher of the Year. Please visit our Educator Recognition page or click on the following link to download the 2015-16 District Teacher of the Year Profile Sheet:

[http://www.ride.ri.gov/DTOY\\_2016\\_Application](http://www.ride.ri.gov/DTOY_2016_Application) If you have any questions regarding the District Teacher of the Year program, please contact Mary Keenan, at [mary.keenan@ride.ri.gov](mailto:mary.keenan@ride.ri.gov) or 222-8497.

### **Governor Raimondo's Budget: full funding for education aid; funds for early learning, school construction, dual enrollment**

On behalf of the schoolchildren of Rhode Island, I am grateful for and enthusiastic about Governor Raimondo's budget proposal. Governor Raimondo has said many times that the future prosperity of Rhode Island demands that we develop and maintain a great system of public education. Her Fiscal Year 2016 budget recognizes the many achievements of our school leaders, teachers, and students and provides the support we need to continue making progress – particularly by increasing aid to local school communities, by giving students greater access to challenging coursework, and by expanding opportunities in the vital area of early learning.

Among the highlights in Governor Raimondo's budget for education are:

- funding of the fifth year of the Funding Formula for education aid to local school communities, at \$35.5-million increase;
- full support for our plan to bring the number of state-funded prekindergarten classrooms to 60 by 2019, with \$1 million in additional funding for 2016;
- \$1.4 million to bring full-day kindergarten to all Rhode Island communities (7 school districts at this time do not offer universal full-day kindergarten);
- an additional \$20 million to rebuild and modernize school facilities, with a School Building Authority established within RIDE and a projected \$80 million in funding for Fiscal Year 2017; and
- \$1.3 million to pick up all tuition fees for students in dual enrollment or concurrent enrollment, enough funds to increase participation by 50 percent.

We have developed a table on the education aid for each community under Governor Raimondo's Fiscal Year 2016 budget, which we have posted [here](#).

**Work Group Action Plan Review:** The workgroups met to review the progress on each plan and to update the plan in order to document the tasks completed and project completion dates for the remainder.

**Advisory Time:** Patti Hein suggested that RISEAC respond as a group to provide feedback to RIDE on the strategic plan (in addition to having each member complete the online survey on their own) to ensure that the values and priorities in the plan include the issues that this group is most directly impacted by

and to ensure that the RISEAC goals and the needs of students with disabilities are incorporated into the state's five year strategic plan for public education. Sue Donovan and Patti Hein will draft a letter for the group to respond to prior to submitting to RIDE's Ambassador Design Team (ADT)

**Motion to** approve the submission of a letter from RISEAC to RIDE's Ambassador Design Team (ADT) to ensure that the RISEAC goals and the needs of students with disabilities are incorporated into the state's five year strategic plan for public education by Laura Laviano; seconded by Robin Pacheco. All approved. Motion accepted.

**Public Comment: None**

**Motion to adjourn** made by Ann Brockmann and seconded by Maria Silvestri-Golotto. . All approved.

**Meeting was adjourned: 8: 05 pm**